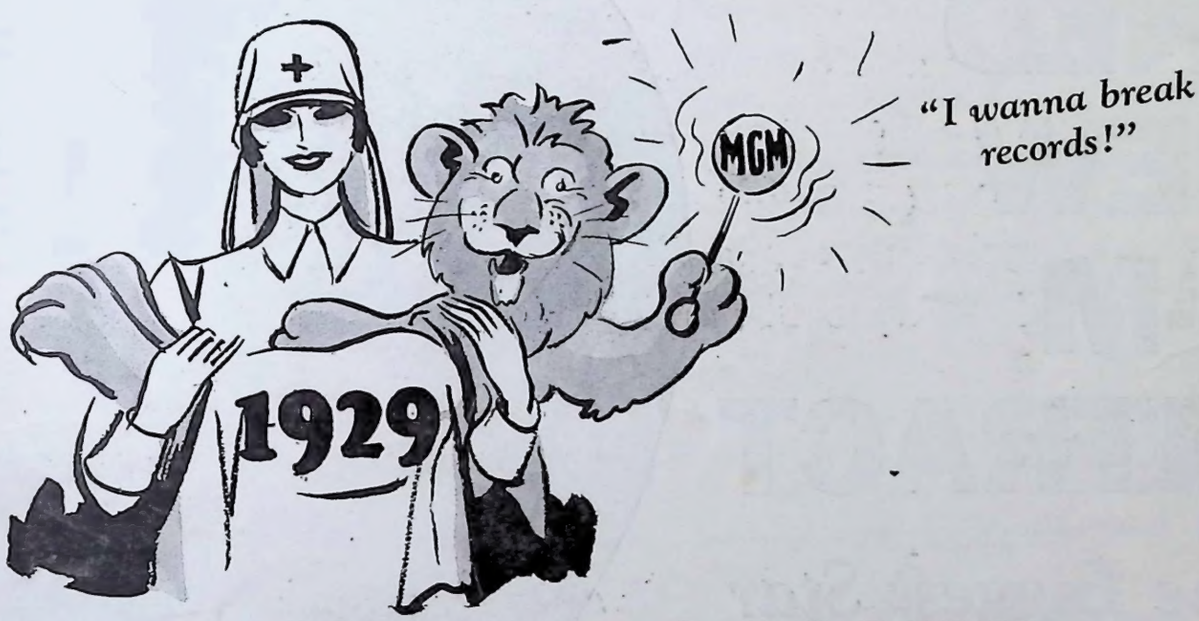
CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST

Vol. 20, No. 35 TORONTO 2, CANADA December 29th, 1928



"I wanna break records!"

"IT'S A LION!"

Congratulations! Looks like 1929 is another M-G-M Year! 1928 brought "Dancing Daughters", "Show People", "White Shadows", "Excess Baggage", "While the City Sleeps", Masks of the Devil", "West of Zanzibar" and other M-G-M hits! 1929 brings "The Trail of '98" (*Dolores Del Rio*), "A Woman of Affairs" (*Gilbert-Garbo*), "Alias Jimmy Valentine" (*Wm. Haines*), "The Flying Fleet" (*Novarro*) and more Big Ones. Stick to Leo of M-G-M and wear diamonds and smiles in the New Year!

PUBLISHED BY

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY LIMITED

259 SPADINA AVENUE, TORONTO 2

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The Biggest Company

M-G-M

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it's a pleasure!

Canadian Moving Picture DIGEST

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RAY LEWIS
Editor and Managing Director

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Salutations

AT LAST I have grown up, I who was called, "The Infant Industry."

At last I am uncradled, undiapered. They have given me long trousers, a dress shirt, and a top hat, and I have learned to wear them like a gentleman — indeed I am a gentleman, for I possess the necessary qualities which give me this classification.

I embody in my make-up the assimilation of all Arts, Industries, and Finance. I make and unmake fashions. I am the passing show, but although I pass on, I leave my impression upon you. I am one of the most talked of individuals in the world. I appeal to all ages. I say this without conceit, because I have about me the Peter Pan spirit, which is eternally young, and this spirit prevails in all mankind, if you possess the faculty to uncover it.

I can make the boy laugh, and his grandad laugh. I can make them both cry. I am a romantic grown-up, but yet I possess the quality which tends to make the "hard-boiled banker." I am distinctively of this age, a symbol of the Modern Youth, having its fling, sowing its wild oats as gentlemen have sown theirs in ages throughout the ages. I intend to enjoy life with a full capacity, or else how shall I be fitted to give you joy.

I am no moralist, no preacher, no educationalist. I am Joy capitalized, an expression of life. My business is to entertain you, for it appears that I have been destined to assume such a role, and I have no fault to find with my destiny.

If through meeting me you add to your experience, if I teach you virtues, the losing game of what is called "The Vices," if I broaden your sense of geography, if I make you an investor, a capitalist, or a banker, I have not done these things by intent. They are the accidents of your good fortune, through your interest in me.

I am "The Grown-Up Film Industry," whom you have nursed as an infant, whom you have spanked as a boy for his pranks, the youth you have suppressed because he believed in self-expression, and now I am a man, "master of my own destiny, guardian of my inheritance, capable of self-government, and sufficiently intelligent to arbitrate any action, by which I am motivated, with you.

I greet 1929 with optimism. Although I am your servant, in that I am at your service, I am also your host, meeting you on an equality.

The Infant Industry bids you adieu, the Man salutes you!

Ray Lewis

RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

AN INTERESTING arrival in New York on the S. S. Majestic, arriving December 24th, was Mr. S. W. Smith, Managing Director of the British Lion Film Corporation Ltd., one of England's most go-ahead new Film producing companies.

Mr. Smith is a pioneer of the British film colony and has been responsible for many notable English productions. He is also well-known in Canada and hopes to cross the border for a flying visit before returning to England. His visit to America is partly to look into the "talkies" and general market conditions.

The British Lion Film Company was organized at the end of 1927, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Edgar Wallace, England's amazingly popular and prolific writer of novels and plays of the "mystery thriller" type.

America has seen Warner Bros. "talkie" version of "The Terror," one of his best. Now, under the energetic guidance of Mr. S. W. Smith, the British Lion Company in their first production year, have completed film versions of a number of his most popular novels and plays. Several of these have been made as "quota" pictures for big American renting houses.

Warner Bros. have "The Flying Squad," produced by Arthur Maude, who, it will be recalled, was responsible for some excellent pictures in Hollywood. Now this same producer is at work for the Company in connection with the British sound-system Phototone, on "The Clue of The New Pin," to be handled by P.D.C. This will be the first full-length English picture to have sound accompaniment.

MR. SMITH is at present spending a week in Toronto. In addition to his other producing interests Mr. Smith is also special representative for the Regal Films Limited in England.

A recent production which he has brought to Canada is the French picture, "Verdun," locations on the famous battlefields of France, and produced by Monier, said to be the greatest of the Leon Piorier, said to be the greatest of the French film producers.

THIS PICTURE will be released through the Regal Film Exchanges of Canada, and two of British Lion films, made from the most popularized Edgar Wallace stories, namely, "The Ringer" and "Chick" will also be released by Regal Films.

Mr. Smith has brought several other English productions with him.

IN our Christmas issue we promised to give you all the gossip of the Famous Players Canadian Corporation's banquet to Mr. Clarence Robson.

Mr. Arthur Cohen, secretary-treasurer of the Company, was toastmaster; and Mr. Cohen was as usual equal to the occasion, in fact I believe that Mr. Robson's celebration made him more sparkling than ever.

HOWEVER, although his introductions were couched wittily, Mr. Cohen managed to have a serious undertone vibrate through his comments, and when he arose to "do his stunt," all turned an expectant look and prepared for "the spice of the program."

In talking about the virtues of Mr. Robson, Mr. Cohen stated that what he admired in Mr. Robson was his ability to make an excellent bargain, and retain the friendship of the individual with whom he bargained. I have an idea that if Mr. Cohen congratulated Mr. Robson on his bargain-making abilities, they must be "bargains."

MR. J. P. BICKELL'S address had a ring of sincere appreciation of Mr. Robson's services, which was unmistakable. Mr. Bickell emphasized the fact that Mr. Robson had been loyal to the organization despite the flattering offers which had been made to him, and that he had grown up with Famous Players, which in 1918 had a seating capacity of 6,400, comprising of about seven theatres, and had played an important part in its development, a growth which now gave the company about 164 theatres covering a seating capacity of 175,000 seats.

Mr. Bickell, during his comments concerning Mr. Robson, quite frequently turned to the "guiding spirit" of the organization, as he termed Mr. N. L. Nathanson. "He is without a peer on this continent, or any other," Said Mr. J. P. Bickell, in discussing Mr. Nathanson's ability as a showman and financier. "He has preferred to remain with those who have built up the organization with him, rather than turn to broader fields for which his ability has equipped him. It is to Mr. Nathanson that we owe the conception of Famous Players, and its expansive, successful program.

COL. JOHN COOPER made a splendid address as did also Capt. F. C. Badgley, of the Ontario Government Motion Picture Bureau at Ottawa. Mr. N. L. Nathanson was in excellent form, and his general remarks were presented in that intimate and friendly tone which makes Mr. Nathanson such a brilliant salesman when he wishes to exercise this ability. That night he was selling the Famous Players' appreciation of Mr. Robson, and he sold it well.

If Mr. Nathanson was not such a young man, probably of Mr. Robson's years, his address might have been termed, "fatherly" in its spirit of paternal interest, as he referred time and again to Mr. Robson, whom one could easily see had earned an effectionate and appreciative position in the consideration of Mr. Nathanson. The poem, printed on the menu to Clarence Robson—

"After all the hopes and fears,
Trials and troubles of ten long years,
We greet you tonight with

(Continued on Page 6)

Standing on the threshold of an era that seems destined to eclipse, in accomplishment and progress, the greatest the Motion Picture has known

Educational Pictures

extend their greeting to the exhibitor and to the industry at large.

Educational Pictures

"THE SPICE OF THE PROGRAM"

EDUCATIONAL FILM EXCHANGES · INC.

E · W · HAMMONS · President

Ray Presents

(Continued from Page 4)

Ringing cheers,
And this is the wish we give
May the next ten years and
Twenty years to come
Be bigger and better than
Those before
May fortune her favours on
you pour,
Just as long as you live."

MR. NATHANSON stated that the lines of this poem were expressive of the wishes of the officers of the company toward Mr. Robson, and that perhaps some day, his son and Mr. Robson's son would be associates of Famous Players, carrying on the work which they as "the elders" of the company had begun. He hoped so at least.

A DISTINGUISHED guest who graced the occasion with his cheery presence and talk, was His Worship Mayor Sam McBride. Mayor McBride gave in his tribute to Mr. Robson, an outline of the development of Famous Players, sketchily emphasizing its points of growth, but grew most eloquent in becoming reminicent of its worth to the various communities which make up the life of Canada.

Mayor McBride stated that the courtesy of the managers of the Famous Players, during his recent trip through Western Canada is something which he will never forget. At each point he visited there was a representative of Famous Players ready to facilitate, to assist in any of the civic duties in which he played a part, ready to perform, or assist in executing any office which was necessary.

HIS WORSHIP the Mayor was unstinting in his complimentary remarks concernnig the position of the Famous Players; and those who know His Worship the Mayor know that he only praises where he believes praise is due, for he is a man of strong convictions, he has a fearless outlook, and an irresistible impulse to "hit the nail on the head," whether you are for him or "agin him."

One particularly amusing remark was His Worship's reference to John Hazza of Calgary, whom Mayor McBride stated appeared to officiate in the capacity of "counsellor to the Mayor." "In fact," said Mayor McBride, "Mr. Hazza runs Calgary, tells the Mayor what to do, and makes them like him for it."

MAYOR McBRIDE further stated that the service of entertainment presented at the Famous Players was 100 per cent., and that they were a decided acquisition to the growth of Canada.

ONE HALF of a million dollars has been reported as spent on the Canadian production "Carry On Sergeant," which apparently is failing to "carry on" if the reports from headquarters are carried out.

The government loaned its studio at Trenton, and the officers of our government, the Premier of our Province of Ontario cooperated with the producers of "Carry On Sergeant," to make it make Canadian history.

THE LIST of Canadian investors is a most representative one, but this only goes to prove that names will not make picture appeal, finance will not make picture appeal, this quality must be in the production.

What is the matter with "Carry On Sergeant?" We have heard various reports, but probably those which interest exhibitors in particular is that it has become the subject of a controversy with the public, regarding the material which has been utilized to build up its story. During its engagement at Kingston, Ont., it played to fair business, although its exploitation by the house management was particularly persistent, and the management stretched its imagination to herald it as a Kingston-made film because of a few local scenes incorporated in the unfoldment of the story.

THE PRESS responding to criticisms from the public were out "after its blood," but held off until the close of the engagement, for the students who attended the showing needed no fuel to the fire of contempt with which they regarded what has been termed, "the human interest," in the story.

Captain Bairnsfather was to have made a personal appearance, but he did not appear, neither did the four musicians as scheduled.

THE comments about Kingston in connection with "Carry On Sergeant," is that it will take the theatre months to live down that film; and the press stated that not a dozen people were left in the house, at any of the performances, at the finish of the picture.

A three-column review from the Kingston Whig Standard, ends as follows—"Apart from all criticism on military grounds, there is a certain element of hysteria when the war was first announced which is not entirely in keeping with Canadian thought. It is very nice to see depicted on a film a picture of great excitement as the men employed at the "Atlas" Locomotive Works left their work at noon on August 4th. But is it a correct presentation of the facts? So far as Kingston is concerned we have no complaint, and in fact Kingston can congratulate itself on having staged the only two aspects of the production which are beyond criticism; and lastly, when Captain Bruce Bairnsfather stated that he was going to produce a purely Canadian film we surely did not expect to see the Stars and Stripes of our Southern cousins waved under our very noses on at least two occasions."

I HAVE several other communications from various exhibitors and from the press which I will present to you for your consideration in our next issue. Meanwhile what are producers of "Carry On Sergeant" doing with it, and the bills which they have contracted? There are threats of legal action in order.

Capitol Winnipeg Shows Synchronized Pictures

The Capitol Theatre, Winnipeg, announces that the synchronized pictures started at the theatre, Saturday, December 29. This class of screen entertainment has been at the Metropolitan Theatre, one of the Famous Players houses, one block from the Capitol, for the past eight weeks, and has been meeting with very generous patronage. The Metropolitan has dispensed with its orchestra and its organists, but the Capitol will retain the Capitolians under Earle Hill and its two organists, but the decision to place a new organ in the Capitol has been deferred until the sound pictures have been tried out.

Managers of theatres in Winnipeg outside of the Famous Players theatres, have been doing everything possible to secure synchronized pictures for their houses. They have sensed the atmosphere and believe that it is necessary to have this class of screen programmes in their house if they wish to exist. The cost for a theatre seating 500 to 600 is $17,000; it cost $30,000 in each instance to install the synchronized pictures in the Capitol and the Metropolitan theatres in Winnipeg.

Some of the managers have gone to New York, where they were presented with a dozen different sound pictures for their examination, the main difficulty being that many had not sufficient backing to make their enterprises safe to invest in.

H. M. Thomas Makes Spirited Address West

Talks to Managers in His Territory on Canadianizing Their Theatres

H. M. Thomas, western divisional manager of the Famous Players Canadian Corporation, who has been spending two months in the territory from the Great Lakes to Victoria installing synchronized pictures in some of the division's theatres, has returned to Toronto after stiffening up the management of all the theatres, "putting them on their toes" so to speak, and none can do it better with his tact and diplomacy and his knowledge of the show business.

The new theatre at Saskatoon is making good progress to completion, he states; it will cost $300,000 when finished. The sum of $50,000 is being spent in the Capitol Theatre in Edmonton, and improvements and alterations have been made in many others to allow for the installation of the Sound pictures, he states. Mr. Thomas believes that the Famous Players has secured the best of the "Talkies" for their theatres. Previous to leaving Winnipeg all the managers of the western circuit came to Winnipeg for a conference with Mr. Thomas. Walter F. Davis being in charge of the arrangements.

Mr. Thomas, in his address, impressed on the managers to work for everything that would benefit Canada, and to give every assistance possible to Canadian institutions, to all religious bodies, to service clubs and such like organizations. Mr. Thomas pointed out that the company with which they were associated was Canadian, fully 93 per cent of the stock being Canadian owned money. In no way was the company affiliated with any United States organizations. The conference closed with a dinner in the beautiful Empire Room of the St. Charles Hotel, newly opened. The guests were: Frank Miley, Saskatoon; E. J. Fields, Moose Jaw; Pete Egan, Regina; R. Ferguson, Brandon; F. Ronson, Fort William; A. Grayburn, Port Arthur; Walter F. Davis and Charles Straw, Winnipeg, with members of the press and managers of a number of the film companies also present. Norman Code, V. Armond and Eral Hill, in charge of western work, also attending. There were no speeches, only informal talks.

Norma Shearer has been awarded one of the prize roles of the new season—that of Mary in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's all-talking version of "The Trial of Mary Dugan," which goes into production soon under the direction of Bayard Veiller, author of the play.

JOSEPH HENABERY FOR COLUMBIA

Joseph Henabery is the latest director of prominence to be added by Columbia to the directorial line-up the company is asesmbling to handle its "talkie" and silent productions. He joins such well-known megaphone handlers as Frank R. Capra, Erle C. Kenton, Phil Rosen, Christy Cabanne, Renaud Hoffman and Scott Dunlap.

Mr. Henabery has been identified with the motion picture industry since 1910. He first achieved fame as an actor, counting as one of his outstanding portrayals that of Lincoln in "The Birth of a Nation." As a director he has been associated with most of the big companies, including Famous Players, First National, Pathe and Universal.

Among his outstanding productions, which cover both the comedy and dramatic field, are "Cobra," "See You in Jail," "Lonesome Ladies," "Sailor's Wives' and "Clear the Deck."

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Theatre to rent or purchase, in good live town. Reply

R. H. COCKBURN,

STURGEON FALLS, ONT.

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SHOWMANSHIP

Ideal Theatre for married couple

Where Mother helps Father

To manage the theatre

And "get the dough."

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Canadian Moving Picture Digest

A Happy New Year
To all my friends,
From far and near
To where the rainbow ends,
Ends, did I say?
May it never end,
For those I greet
This New Year,
For those I term,
"My Friend."

H. M. THOMAS,

Western Divisional Manager,

Famous Players Canadian Corporation.

Three Millions Letters Received by Players

Average of 10,000 Letters a Day Received by Thirty-Three Stars

Thirty-three persons in Hollywood receive more mail than any other group of equal number in the world. They are the stars and featured players under contract to Paramount. They receive an average of 10,000 letters a day, 250,000 a month, 3,000,000 a year. Their mail is delivered to a postoffice ten by fifteen feet in size—probably the busiest 150 square feet in the country.

Paramount because of its contract players, receives more mail than any other firm or individual of the west, according to P. B. O'Brien, postmaster of Los Angeles. O'Brien doubts if the record is equalled by any other receiver of mail in the country except, perhaps, one of the national mail order firms.

The Paramount players receive mail from all parts of the world. Collectors of contemporary stamps could soon complete an album from the envelopes delivered.

The chief recipient of mail is Clara Bow, the girl who made "It" a household word around the globe. Miss Bow receives almost 40,000 letters a month. Others of her fellow and sister stars on the Paramount lot who keep Uncle Sam's mail clerks busy are Bebe Daniels, Esther Ralston, Florence Vidor, George Bancroft, Richard Dix, Emil Jannings, Adolphe Menjou and Charles Rogers. These are the stars.

The featured feminine players, forming a list of names known far and wide, include Jean Arthur, Baclanova, Evelyn Brent, Mary Brian, Nancy Carroll, Ruth Chatterton, Doris Hill, Leone Lane, Ruth Taylor and Fay Wray.

Others under contract to Paramount whose quota is included in the grand total of 10,000 letters a day are: Richard Arlen, William Austin, Wallace Beery, Clive Brook, Robert Castle, Lane Chandler, Maurice Chevalier, Chester Conklin, Gary Cooper, John Cromwell, James Hall, Jack Holt, Neil Hamilton, Phillips R. Holmes, Fred Kohler, Jack Luden, Paul Lukas, Jack Oakie, Guy Oliver and William Powell.

Lethbridge Amusements Ltd. Arrange for New Theatre

Lethbridge Amusements Limited, an Alberta incorporated company, has completed arrangements for a new motion picture theatre to be erected on the site now occupied by the Palace Theatre in that city. The coming year promises to be one of the liveliest in theatre construction in Lethbridge since the city was incorporated.

Kallet Circuit Signs For Columbia Product

The Kallett Circuit, one of the most important theatre chains in New York, has booked Columbia's entire product for the following theatres:

Lincoln, Orpheum, James ,in Utica; Capitol in Ilion; Madison in Oneida; Capitol, Strand, in Rome; Harvard, Regent and Avon in Syracuse.

The deal was engineered by Joe Miller of the Buffalo office and C. R. Halligan of the Albany exchange.

Operators Winnipeg Theatres Give Banquet to Engineers

The operators of the motion picture houses of Winnipeg honored the experts of the Northern Electrical Company, who are installing the Movietone in western theatres, at a dinner at the Marlborough Hotel, H. S. Walker, A. Cash, Mrs. Cash and A. Jackson were the guests. V. Armand, chief projectionist of the Famous Players Canadian Corporation; R. Reney, President of the Winnipeg local of the International Projectionists Union, and W. Hale, of the Metropolitan operating room, were the chief speakers. The party left the following morning to install equipment in Calgary and Regina theatres.

A Happy New Year
To all our friends,
May this be the year
In which Prosperity begins
And Trouble ends.

The Coleman Electric Co.
258 Victoria Street - - Toronto, Ont.

Radio-Keith-Orpheum Discontinues Agency

President Hiram S. Brown played Santa Claus to vaudeville artists' representatives this past week, when he called the representatives of the theatrical trade papers to his offices in the Palace Theatre building and announced that the Executive Board of the Radio - Keith - Orpheum Corporation would discontinue practice and policy of the so-called "collection agency" on January 1st, 1929, and that beginning with the new year, the entire 5% commission paid by the artists booked in vaudeville theatres of this circuit of theatres, would go to the artists' representatives. Previously this commission had been divided and one-half was paid the agent and one-half retained by the collection agency for service.

President Brown stated that the Radio-Keith-Orpheum executives are determined to inaugurate policies in the new organization that tend toward efficiency and equitable dealings. In order to start at the beginning, he decided to correct a system which he finds generally regarded as unethical and unfair. Through the entire amount collected for representatives' services being paid to the agent, he has been assured, he says, that those who represent the performer and artist will hereafter be able to maintain their agencies without resorting to extra remuneration, nor charge additional sums for representation and service as heretofore.

If it is true that the 2½% formerly paid the agent was insufficient and he now receives the full 5%, it is reasonable to assume that the service will be improved and that the artists and agents will discontinue practices and methods which have brought so much unfavorable criticism to vaudeville.

The spirit of fair play which inspired this action on the part of President Brown should remedy a great evil. In the past there have been many rumours and many stories printed in the trade papers of graft and collusion amongst the agents and bookers, and President Brown has indicated by this magnanimous gesture, that he will tolerate nothing of this nature in the future in any company or subsidiary of Radio-Keith-Orpheum, and that if there is anything fundamentally wrong or basicly unsound about a system in which his organization is concerned, it will be promptly corrected.

In return the extra remuneration to artists representatives should be an inspiration and should encourage that large group of agents who are granted privileges and franchises to represent the stars, performers and artists on the booking floor of Radio-Keith-Orpheum to produce larger results and obtain new material during the coming year. On the other hand it is pointed out that the artist will be greatly benfited as he will no longer be solicited nor asked by his representative to pay extra sums beyond the 5% commission, as that being liberal and ample, will be the only amount he is to be expected or permitted in the future to pay under any circumstances for service and managerial representation.

Kiwanis Club Postpones Entertainment for Children

Various features have caused an unusual situation in Canada with regard to the holding of special holiday shows for orphans and poor children. Because of the 'flu epidemic,' the annual Christmas Cheer performances at the Regent and Imperial Theatres, Ottawa, under the auspices of the Kiwanis Club have been indefinitely postponed. The annual Christmas show at the Imperial Theatre, Montreal, under the auspices of the Montreal Motorists League, usualy a big yearly treat, was also called off. Plans for similar gatherings in other cities were also curtained.

Another contrary influence in the Province of Quebec has also been found in the new law prohibiting the admission of all children under 16 years of age from moving picture theatres. Manager George Rotsky of the Palace Theatre, Montreal, did stage a Saturday morning free show for poor children and the house was crowded with youngsters who were delighted with the Movietone entertainment. No action has, as yet, been taken by the authorities in the matter but other exhibitors have not shown an inclination to offer free shows under charity auspices.

"Sneeze Outside" States Ernie Moule

To safeguard patrons and to encourage public confidence during the 'flu scare,' Manager Ernie Moule of the Brant Theatre, Brantford, Ontario, hit upon the novel policy of asking any person who gave a sneeze during a performance to leave the theatre, the admission price being refunded at the box-office.

Ushers were instructed to listen-in for sneezes and, if any patron was unable to choke it, he or she was immediately asked to leave for the sake of others. The idea made good copy for the local newspaper.

Inspector Quebec Forbids Films in Certain Schools

J. Carmel States Certain Schools Unsafe for Film Screenings

A situation of very great interest to moving picture theatre men in Montreal has been created by an order of J. Carmel of the Montreal Building Inspection Department prohibiting the holding of picture shows in the theatres of many local Roman Catholic schools because of unsafe building conditions. The Roman Catholic School Corporation has been notified that no more performances are to be held in the school theatres until the halls are reconstructed to meet the civic regulations in the matter of safety. For some years it had been the custom of the corporation to rent the school theatres to outside commercial interests for picture and other theatrical engagements.

The matter is one of prime importance to the exhibitors because the new Quebec statute, effective last spring, barred all children under 16 years of age from all theatres presenting motion picture entertainment but made an exception of school institutions having theatres and parish halls. The result was that the juveniles flocked to the school theatres practically without restriction even though regular film releases were being presented under secular auspices.

Following a theatre disaster in Montreal two years ago, local exhibitors were forced to make many costly alterations to theatre buildings and, on top of that, the Provincial Government passed the law which barred children from all film shows, with the exception noted. The civic order now places a stop on picture shows in the school halls.

Mgr. Piette, chairman of the School Commission, asserted a readiness to comply with the civic order, declaring that the school theatres would not be rented to outsiders. Father Degrandpre, a member of the commission, declared that the Quebec law prohibiting the admission of children to picture theatres did not serve to stop moving picture shows in school buildings. Mgr. Piette drew his attention to the danger of panic, however, and felt that it would be better to comply with the civic notice.

This form of competition has therefore been removed for legitimate exhibitors in Montreal.

The owners of the Rialto Theatre, Edmonton, Alta., are making $30,000 worth of alterations to their house. William Long is the manager. A two stories' addition of brick and concrete will be added.

Round About the Studios

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's first talking picture version of a musical comedy hit went into production last week when Al Green started work on "The Five O'Clock Girl," which M-G-M bought some time ago as a starring film for Marion Davies.

"Ruby Lips," newest Hal Roach comedy starring Charley Chase, will be synchronized at the new Victor recording plant, located in the newly renovated Liederkrantz Hall, at 111 East Fifty-Eighth St. This is in accordance with the recent contract signed by Roach and officials of the Victor Company, and it is expected that many subsequent Roach comedies, which are distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, will be synchronized with musical scores and sound effects at the same laboratory.

John Gilbert is the first screen actor selected by Photoplay Magazine to rate four super-quality starrings films in one year. With each issue this periodical makes its choice of the six best pictures of the month, classifying these "best films" at the end of the year by stars. During the past year four Gilbert pictures, "Four Walls," "The Cossacks," "Man, Woman and Sin" and "The Masks of the Devil" won special mention. Emil Jannings was next with three, and Marion Davies, Joan Crawford and Greta Garbo each had two.

Walter Pidgeon has been engaged by Tiffany-Stahl to play opposite Eve Walter Southern in her latest starring vehicle for that company temporarily titled "The Miracle." Montagu Love has also been cast for a prominent part in the picture, which is being directed by George Archainbaud.

Production of "The Cocoanuts," starring the four Marx Brothers, as an all talking moving picture will begin February 1 at Paramount's Long Island studio.

Joan Crawford and Nils Asther in a scene from "The Dream of Love," Miss Crawford's first Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer starring picture.

Raquel Torres, selected for one of the leading roles in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "The Bridge of San Luis Rey."

Several additions to the cast of "Broadway," the famous Jed Harris stage play being picturized by Universal under the direction of Paul Fejos, are announced. These include Robert Ellis, George Ovey, Betty Francisco, Fritz Held and George Davis. Glenn Tryon, Evelyn Brent and Myrna Kennedy play the three principal roles.

Florence Vidor plays a dual role in "Tong War," the Paramount picture in which she is featured with Wallace Beery. In the opening sequences she is a society woman. Later in the picture she is shown as a woman of the streets, degenerated through contact with forces of the underworld.

Erle Hampton, formerly assistant publicity director of Fox West Coast studios, has been added to Donn McElwaine's staff at the Pathe studios in Culver City. Hampton has had long experience as a publicist.

Marie Quillan, sister of Eddie, is destined to be a real screen "bet," according to Pathe studio officials who have seen her work in "Noisy Neighbors" in support of her noted brother.

Clara Bow's supporting cast for "The Wild Party," her next picture, has just been strengthened by the engagement of some of the leading young players in Hollywood. The additions to the cast include Ruth Taylor as "Baba," Jack Nelson as "George," Phillips R. Holmes as "Phil," Jack Oakie as the lite of the party, and Shirley O'Hara. Miss O'Hara is remembered as the leading woman with Adolphe Menjou in "A Gentleman of Paris."

Cliff Bowes, who has returned to the Educational Studios, is nearing completion on his first new Cameo Comedy, which has been titled "Served Hot."

Madam Sen, daughter of the late Sun Yet Sen, first President of China, accompanied by her two small sons, were guests last week at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios, where they made a complete tour of the big motion picture plant, the Sens are traveling incognito.

The Honorable Walter S. Marks, member of Parliament and Chairman of the Royal Motion Picture Committee of Australia, was a recent visitor at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's big plant, where he personally filmed with a regular motion picture camera several scenes showing Louis B. Mayer, Irving Thalberg, Norma Shearer and Ernest Torrence in intimate poses about the lot. The film will be shown to the Motion Picture Committee upon his return and then added to his library, which contains many reels of notable personages throughout the world.

Gary Cooper, who has just completed an important featured role with Lupe Velez and Louis Wolheim in "The Wolf Song" has been assigned to a big part in Emil Jannings' new Paramount picture, which will have a picturesque Alpine setting. Cooper will play the role of a Swiss artist in love with Janning's wife. Esther Ralston will play the wife.

Patrick Kearney, one of the most successful members of the younger group of American playwrights is now on the writing staff at the Paramount studio in Hollywood. Kearney is best known for his dramatization of Theodore Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" and also of "A Man's Man." His most recent play was a dramatic version of Sinclair Lewis' "Elmer Gantry."

Completing his new series of starring films with "Desert Law," Tim McCoy will leave the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studio this week for New York. After a brief stovover here, he will sail for England, spending Christmas with his wife and family in London.

Josephine Dunn, attractive player for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, now appearing in "A Man's Man," William Haines' latest starring picture.

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